Amendments to the Claims

In the Claims

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently amended) A method for cleaning containers containing a chemical comprising the steps of:

providing a container disposed on a mobile railcar ~~having~~ consisting essentially of a quantity of a chemical therein wherein the container has a plurality of valves for attaching a plurality of pipes thereto wherein the chemical is selected from the group consisting of chlorine gas and sulfur dioxide gas;

providing a dry input gas for injecting into the container;

heating said dry input gas to a temperature of between about 100° F and 300° F;

providing a tank having a neutralizing material contained therein connected to the container;

injecting the container with a quantity of the heated input gas to form an input gas/chemical mixture;

removing the input gas/chemical mixture from the container; ~~and~~

injecting the input gas/chemical mixture into the tank for neutralizing the chemical;

repeating the injection of further quantities of input gas to form further input gas/chemical mixtures;

removing the further quantities of input gas/chemical mixtures from the container; and

injecting the further input gas/chemical mixtures into the tank for neutralizing the chemical until the level of chemical within the container has reached a predetermined level.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the container is a rail tank car.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of:

providing a vacuum pump attached to the container; and

removing the chemical or the input gas/chemical mixture via the vacuum pump.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the input gas is nitrogen gas.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of:

providing an input gas tank attached to the container; and

heating the input gas prior to injection into the container.

6. (Cancelled)

7. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the input gas is air.

8. (Original) The method of claim 7 wherein the air is dried via a dehumidifier.

9. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of:

attaching an input pipe to the container via a first valve; and

feeding the input gas into the container via the input pipe.

10. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of:

inspecting the container prior to removing the chemical contained therein.

11. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of:

searching the container for leaks prior to removing the chemical contained therein.

12. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of:

gauging the pressure within the container prior to removing the chemical contained therein.

13. (Original) The method of claim 12 further comprising the step of:

injecting a quantity of input gas into the container if the pressure within the container is about 0 psi prior to removing the chemical contained therein.

14. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the tank neutralizes both chlorine gas and sulfur dioxide gas.

15. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the tank contains a neutralizing material selected from the group consisting of sodium hydroxide, potassium hydroxide, sodium carbonate, calcium hydroxide, sodium sulfite, sodium thiosulfite, ferrous chloride and solid bed absorbents.

16. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of:

providing a control panel for controlling the injection of the input gas and removal of the chemical or the input gas/chemical mixture from the container.

17. (Original) The method of claim 16 further comprising the step of:

synchronizing the injection of the input gas and removal of the chemical or the input gas/chemical mixture from the container via the controller.

18. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of:

providing an input gas line attached to an input valve on the container;

providing an output line attached to an output valve on the container;

opening the input valve to allow the input gas to flow into the container while the output valve is closed;

closing the input valve; and

opening the output valve to remove the input gas and chemical mixture from the container.

19. (Original) The method of claim 18 further comprising the steps of:

providing a vacuum pump attached to the output line; and

activating the vacuum pump after the output valve is opened to remove the input gas and chemical mixture from the container.

20. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the chemical contained within the container is chlorine gas and further comprising the step of:

injecting the container with the input gas and removing the input gas/chemical mixture a plurality of times so the chlorine gas concentration within the container is about 0.5 ppm or below.

21. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the chemical contained within the container is sulfur dioxide gas and further comprising the step of:

injecting the container with the input gas and removing the input gas/chemical mixture a plurality of times so the sulfur dioxide concentration within the container is about 2.0 ppm or below.

22. (Cancelled)

23. (Cancelled)

24. (Previously amended) The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of:

heating the input gas to a temperature of about 200°F.